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KNIGHTS OF THE GOLDEN CIRCLE.

We take occasion to present to our readers the following letters and circular, relating to this organization, which has been supposed to have exerted so much influence in bringing about the unfortunate war in which we are now engaged. These letters were written to a gentleman of Boston, in reply to letters asking for information concerning the K. G. C., and seem to be written with frankness. Of the organization, it will be seen that it was intended for political and military effect; and by a perusal of the circular it will be seen, that it had its existence in every SLAVE STATE, and embraced an army of sixteen thousand men. The grand object of the organization, if we are to believe the statements contained in this document, was an invasion of Mexico to aid Juarez, and inaugurate a new slave empire on the continent of America. The commander assures us that the organization was not to be a "miserable fillibuster concern "-no, it was to be something grander than Walker fighting the "greasers" in Central America with less than a hundred men; something more brilliant than Lopez struggling with heroic fortitude against destiny to meet the death of a felon; something grander than Touissaint L'Overture and his brothers in bondage, striking with bloody hands for the rights of manhood -- it was to be the realization of an American protectorate over Mexico in earnest, in consideration of the blessings and benefits of a new era of slavery. But the high hopes and excessive vanity of the "President" seem to have met with a reverse, and the power of the organization turned to the aid of the States in rebellion,

instead of reaping golden honors and more substantial glories in Mexico. But our friends of the "Golden Circle" should not despair, for it is possible that when defeat and disaster shall have overwhelmed them in their present field of operations, they can still look forward to a realization of their darling schemes, and dream again of a Paradise beyond the Rio Grande.

With this brief introduction we lay the papers before our readers, with the hope that they may be found sufficiently interesting to justify a careful perusal.

Headquarters 1st Md. Reg. K. G. C. Mallby House, Baltimore, Apr. 6th. '60.

Sir,—You favor of the 31st ultimo, came to hand on Monday last, directed to the Secretary of the K. G. C. I doubt not, sir, you have been correctly informed, to a certain extent, as to the objects of our organization from the article enclosed in your favor to me of the above date. It contained some information that was in the main correct.

We have a system in our organization requring an obligation from every member. We have Passwords, Signs, and an emblem of our order by which every K. G. C. is known to every other K. G. C. Enclosed, find an obligation, which, if you wish to become a member, you will please return to me with your signature attached, and remit me \$11.50 which will entitle you to the three degrees of the order, the secret cypher by which we correspond when necessary, an emblem of the order, a copy of the rules and regulations of the K. G. C. and you will also be entitled to receive all information as to our every movement in the future, so far as can be divulged to any one except colonels of the movement, and those above. If after you have joined, received the instructions, &c., &c., our principles, either political or religious, conflict with your ideas of what is right, or if you see any movement of ours which does not meet your approbation, you will be at perfect liberty to resign and be no longer a member, keeping to yourself, of course, the

signs, &c., &c., of our order.

It is not customary for us to pursue this course of sending to an entire stranger our secrets, &c. But, sir, I take you, from your position, to be a gentleman, and am willing to trust you. Our destination is Mexico, going on invitation from that people. It is no fillibuster movement. We have not interfered with any international law or enlistment question, yet we number more than 40,000 members, everywhere except in the N. E. States. Neither will we interfere with our neutrality laws. Ours is to be essentially an American movement, American capital, American brains, and our own peculiar Anglo-Saxon energy to plant our institutions, our principles, and peculiar American liberty in that country. To build up an empire there, independent, and on a basis similar to that of our own. These, then, are a portion of the principles of our creed.

Let me hear from you immediately, as there is now no time to lose; we are nearly ready for a start. Understand, you will not be expected to move with us unless you wish to, yet remain a K G. C. and use your influence at home, as there are hundreds intending to do, for you know we must have friends behind as well as with us, in order to insure success.

Write soon, then, and direct to Col. R. C. Tyler, Maltby House, Baltimore, Md. Yours, &c.,

R. C. TYLER.

P. S.—I am in command of the Maryland Regiment, and have been for more than one year, have expended about \$2000 and one year's time; you can see that I have taken an interest in it.

Yours, &c., R. C. TYLER.

By reference to the above it will be seen that the Knights had pass-words, signs and emblems, by which they could make themselves known to each other, as well as a "secret cypher" by means of which they could correspond in cases of necessity; though what necessity could arise to require such form of correspondence must be conjectured by the reader after a faithful perusal of the following letters by the same author, as well also as the circular letter of "President" Bickley. It also appears that the

main body, or "hoi polloi" of the organization, were not to be informed upon matters pertaining to it. In other words, the leaders only were to know the whole secret, and expected to control the mass whenever they were ready to plant their peculiar American liberties in Mexico. Inasmuch as the organization was of Southern origin, to be officered and controlled exclusively by persons in the slave states, our readers can hardly fail to understand that this peculiar American liberty would have been of a somewhat disagreeable character to at least one class of people.

Headquarters 1st Md. Reg. K. G. C. Maltby House, Baltimore, Apr. 15, '60.

SIR,-Your favor of the 10th inst., is at hand. In consequence of my absence South a few days, it has been neglected until the present time. The organization proposes the aggrandizement of the proud anglo sax-on name, our own peculiar liberty, our laws, our institutions, both civil and military, in fine, sir, we intend to break down the superstitious church exclusiveness that for the last three centuries has erected and maintained barriers (in that unhappy and distracted country) to civilization and advancement, to plant on the ruins of the distracted and broken timbers of her government a basis similar to the machinery of our own beloved institutions. As to your becoming publicly and actively interested in any movement, it would rest altogether with yourself, sir. If you see fit to, most assur-edly you may and can, and we will be proud to call you one of us, interested in our success, and you thus become the means, indirectly, of binding still closer the bonds of union by which our compact is preserved. We all expect to be benefitted by being members, and if you enter the lists you will be rewarded according as your ability and zeal in the working for us may justify. In this organization, merit, not pride of family name or date of commission will have any influence whatever, it rests with the individual man himself to decide whether he reaps a rich reward or not.

You will never be assessed one dime for the purpose of carrying out the operations of the K. G. C. unless you, in your judgment, felt disposed to assist with means to the extent of your ability, nothing compulsory any farther than as stated in my previous letter to you.

Owing to some dissatisfaction, and the

attempt of Walker, Sockridge and others in N. O., to break up the organization, a convention has been called to assemble at Raleigh, N. C., on the 7th of next month, the call being enclosed, which, if you do not see fit to become a member, you will please return to me. If you desire becoming a member, I would like to know immediately, so that you can be entitled to be at the convention in case you desire so to do, by complying with the terms of the accompanying. In case you desire, if you have your initiation credentials, and also letters from one or two men of prominence of your acquaintance, you will be all right. Write me your decision immediately.

Yours very truly,

R. C. TYLER.

The General Order, and Circular Letter below are documents of a singular character. to say the least. "Colonels of regiments are ordered to see that the "forces" under their respective commands assemble "at once" to elect delegates to a final convention to meet at Raleigh, N. C., for the purposes afterward specified, among which were "to enact a code in accordance with the laws of the United States, and the objects of this Association," to "determine upon equipment and time of motion; to prepare an address to the people of the Southern States," and weed out from the Association some who had been unfortunate enough to make themselves objectionable. We doubt very much whether the primal object of the Knights, to become and maintain a military organization for the purpose of going to Mexico on the invitation of that people, could, in any respect, have been consistent with the laws of the United States. seems to us that such a demonstration as seems to have been intended, would have met with the prompt and decisive action of the Federal Government which it deserved, unless, indeed, those in power at Washington at the time, were themselves interested in involving the country in a foreign war, the more easily to accomplish the creation of a Southern Confederacy. Perhaps this, indeed, was the grand secret of the whole organization. The leaders foresaw the downfall of the power of slavery in the Government as soon as it became apparent that Abraham Lincoln was to be elected President of the United States; and sought by this scheme to overcome their griefs and open a new road to success. But the Knights, it seems, were not a "happy family." "For some reason or other," says "President" Bickley, "a studied attempt has been made to break up our organization. As to the cause of this family quarrel, we of course, can give no information, and it may not be of consequence. However the quarrel turned out, it may have been the means of saving the country from serious foreign complications, as well as the disgrace which it is possible might have attached to it, from in some degree countenancing the invasion of a friendly power-inasmuch as the design seems to have of necessity been abandoned for the present, the Knights evidently having more of a job on hand at home, and that too, to be performed a little sooner than was contemplated. "The shafts of jealousy" seem to have been pretty extensively hurled, but if those at whom they were thrown had half the personal vanity of "President Bickley" we don't think much damage could have been done. Whether or not these dissentions or the sudden appearance of a "casus belli" at home has been an obstacle to the accomplishment of their designs, is matter which perhaps time may reveal.

K.G.C.

Head-quarters American Legion, K.G.C., Mobile, Alabama, April 6, 1860.

SPECIAL ORDER.

To Col. R. C. Tyler, First Maryland Regiment, K. G. C.

Sir:—I beg to call your special attention to the following General Order, and the accompanying letter, which will sufficiently explain themselves. I am truly yours in arms, James Ross Howard, K. G. C.

CENERAL ORDER, No. 546.

Circumstances which will be explained at a proper time, and in the usual way, have caused ne to issue this, my official order, and I hereby command all faithful K. G. C.'s to obey the same.

Colonels of regiments upon the reception of

these presents, and special orders this day mailed, will issue their orders to all commanders of Castles in their respective States, to assemble their forces at the earliest convenience, and at once, on the closing of the business of the Castle, proceed to elect one or more delegates to meet in final convention, in the city of Raleigh, N. C., which will be head-quarters until further notice, on Monday, the seventh day of May, [557] 1860, to transact the following business:

1st - To elect a permanent Commander-in-Chief for the military department of the K. G. C., to organize the several departments of the same, and to duly commission and confirm all

commissioned officers.

2d - To elect a permanent financial chairman, and to thoroughly organize the monied

department of the K. G. C.

3d - To elect a permanent President of the third or governing department of the K. G. C. and to enact a code in accordance with the laws of the United States and the objects of this association, and to provide a board of advisement.

4th - To determine upon equipment and time of motion - to prepare an address to the people of the Southern States; to crect such a standard of membership as will clear the organization of all vicious characters, and to do all other necessary and lawful work embraced in the honorable a ms of the K. G. C.

Delegates whether from the organization or the people, will have to bring proper credentials - Southern gentlemen with evidences of social position, are respectfully invited to partake in every part of the labors of the Convention, except what pertains to the mere ceremo-

nial of the order, exclusively.

No political or religious complications or questions can be entertained by the said Convention, when understood in a partizan or sectarian sense. The Convention will sit from day to day, until its labors shall have been completed, when it will adjourn to meet no more as a Convention, in the United States.

GEORGE BICKLEY, K. G. C., President American Legion.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

Fellow Soldiers of the American Legion, K. G. C :- This is probably the last letter I shall have occasion to address you of such import as this, as I have taken the necessary steps to relieve myself of the responsibilities which have devolved on me as the head of this Organization. A studied attempt has been made to break up our Organization, and turn it from the noble purposes for which it was organized, into a disgraceful Fillibuster concern which could only end in defeat and ruin to all con-cerned. The failure has been signal, and to avoid similar occurrences in future, I have called the Convention of the seventh of May.

There was a time, fellow soldiers, when the K. G. C. was a mere idea only. It was a thought - but it contained the seed of a magnificent structure. That idea - that thought - originated with me. I nursed it - cultivated the soil in which the germ was just begin-ning to sprout, until it burst forth, a living fact. I staked all on its issue - I sacrificed

fortune and time, and cast a shadow on my own reputation, to cover up and protect this fabric. I watched it as the stem threw out its roots - as the branches began to spread and the growth assumed colossal proportions, it became necessary to prune the tree of its ugly and ungainly limbs, until now it is a mammoth of strength and beauty - able to resist the tornado blast of prejudice and calumny.

Need I repeat to you how this idea has grown to such a reality. Need I recapitulate the hard struggles that we have had to build up this Order of Knighthood, when every member who has borne our Cross for a single year, has had so many practical illustrations of treachery on the part of men claiming to be true - so many illustrations of the violation of our most solemn obligation. As much as you know of the bad faith of members, you little dream of the number of instances that will be brought to light in due time. Some have succeeded in securing high positions, and as soon as they imagined they had power, they have violated their sacred vows and endeavored to displace me and get themselves in my position. Others again, failing to get office, have become piqued and lost no chance to stander all connected with the Organization. The shafts of jealousy and misrepresentation have been hurled at me, at Col. R. C. Tyler, of Md.; at Col. V. D. Groner, of R. C. Tyler, of Md.; at Col. V. D. Groner, of Va.; at Major Tillery, of N. C.; at Lieut. Col. Tillery, of S. C.; at Major Kinny, of Ky.; at Col. H. C. Young, of Tenn.; at Major W. G. Laeger, of Md.; at Col. R. A. Crawford, of Ga.: at Col. J. M. Wampler, of Va.; at Col. N. J. Scott, of Ala.; at Col. W. D. Robbins, of Miss.; at Major H. C. Castellanos, of La.; at Col. W. B. Temple, of Tenn.; at Gen. E. Gween of Tenns: at Major Larrentees of Ark. Greer, of Texas; at Major Larrentree, of Ark.; at Col. M. M. Black, of La.; at Major R. H. Archer, of Md.; and at nearly every leading member of the Organization. And yet, my And yet, my brothers, these very gentlemen are the ones who have stood closest to my side in the hour of peril.

It was not difficult to see the cause of this abuse. It came in every instance from disappointed aspirants, and I feel proud to acknowledge that I have not allowed black-tongued slander and malice to wipe out the love I bear my friends. They have stood by me, and I shall never desert them while God gives me the generous impulses of a Southern heart. Our cause is a noble one, and we shall struggle to the end - and if, as I imagine, God is with us, the laurels of victory will at last crown us, and we shall forget the past in the realities of the

My embarrassments have been great because I could not defend myself without bringing before the public affairs necessarily secret, and the name of valued friends. Hence, I have studiously avoided self-defence - but when it is necessary, I shall not hesitate to defend myself before this Association. I well know the material of which this organization is composed - I know the false and the good. In the midst of disaffection I know there are many good and true men, and such will be carefully

You who know me best, know how faithfully I have struggled to serve you. I have given you my time - I have expended freely what I had — my friends in many instances have done the same; thus we became not only financially interested in the success of the K. G. C., but we also involved our friends and they theirs. During this period I have been accredited by all faithful K. G. C.'s as de facto President of the Organization, and thereby the Commander of its Forces.

The position was the one which every honest man would have assigned me, since it was myself who originated the Order and built it up

to its present magnificent proportions.

No man has been inveigled into our Order and then asked to do a single act contrary to law, his conscience, or the best interests of society. If its objects were such as meet the approbation of good men - if the attainment of its ends promised profit to its members, and they were willing to unite themselves in a solemn vow to be faithful to each other and the great idea of American civilization, it was their right and their privilege to do so, under the Constitution of the United States, and there is no power in the Federal Government to prevent the fullest exercise of every incurred obligation and object of the K. G. C.

Nor has there ever been manifested by the Government of the United States any disposition to interfere with the Organization, or to thwart its action in any way. For two years past heavy bodies of men have been meeting and drilling in all the Southern States. In Washington city, within hearing of the President's house, the troops of this Order have been constantly and openly drilled: the same is true of Baltimore, Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Lynchburg, Wilmington, Charleston, New Orleans, Memphis, St. Louis, Louisville, Atlanta, Vicksburg, and other places - facts patent to citizens of those cities, and not unknown to the authorities of the United States Government; for the existence and work of the K. G. C. has not been concealed. But why has not the Government of the United States interfered with us? I answer, and as every K. G. C. will testify, that it is because we have constantly affirmed that we would not violate the laws of the land — that we would defend and protect the United States, against all her enemies on land or at sea - that we would interfere with neither politics nor religion - that our field of operations was beyond the jurisdiction of the United States and not against the interest of any nation with which the Government of the United States is on terms of Peace. The question of our right, to expatriate ourselves by emigration into, and the settlement of foreign territory, will not be seriously questioned for one moment, and if we are invited by any people, recognized as a nation by the Government of the United States, to settle in their country, and the foregoing propositions be correct, then we have an undoubted right to choose our own occupation when on the soil of such foreign Government. We can form part of the army of such nation -engage in commerce, manufacture, mining, agriculture, and do all other acts, lawful to the citizens of such nation and the laws of na-

If we organize a powerful army, equip and provide it with arms and material to wage war on a neighboring people, with whom we are on

terms of peace, and in defiance of the protests of such people, then our Government has and will exercise the right to arrest and bring to trial every leader of such movement. The K. G. C. proposes no such work as this, and the investigation of its aims and treaties will prove my positions. It is generally claimed and admitted that our field of operations is Mexico, or some portion thereof, and certainly if President Juarez chooses to invite us to his country, or any Constitutional Governor of any Mexican State, [for under the recognized Constitution of Mexico such power is conferred on the Governor | as emigrants, it is our privilege to accept such invitation, and then if we are incorporated in the Constitutional army of Mexico, with the distinct understanding that we shall put the Government in possession of the capitol, then it is our right to make the best terms we can for this service. It is not the province of the law to inquire into the probable positions we may occupy one year hence - it is enough for the Government to know that we do not violate the laws of the

The above remarks have been elicited by the fact that there are a great many members of the Organization who seem not to comprehend the true position of the K. G. C. There are some who would madly throw themselves into Mexico, law or no law, whether invited or not; and again, there are others who would start at once, unprepared with a single element of success having been placed in their new field of operations; others, again, can only go upon condition that they are supplied with certain places. Indeed, we have no places which will satisfy them. For such, and for the public, I beg to make the following statements: The K. G. C. is a mutual benefit Association, having no guarantees of benefit save in its success, and no guarantee of success save in the harmonious action and good faith of its members. It was sought in the very outset to enlist in its behalf such gentiemen as could and would work patiently for the final attainment of success each one doing his duty to all the rest. In this way the K. G. C. has been built up, until now it numbers many men of character and wealth. There is a Division of about 3,500 men in Texas and Arkansas, under the charge of General Greer; a regiment of about 1,200 men in Maryland, in charge of Col. R. C. Tyler. is a regiment of about 1,000 men in Virginia, in charge of Col. V. D. Groner; a regiment in North Carolina, of about 600 men, in care of Major R. C. Tillery; a regiment forming in South Carolina, by Lt. Col. S. H. Tillery; two regiments forming in Georgia, one in charge of Col. R. A. Crawford, and the otner, at present, unrepresented; a full regiment of 1,000, at Memphis, Tenn., commanded by Col. H. C. Young; a regiment in detached companies in other parts of Tennessee, for which no appointments have been made; a regiment of 1,000 men in Mississippi, commanded by Col. W. D. Robbins, and another forming in the State for which no commission has been issued; two regiments are forming in Alabama - the first commanded by a prominent citizen and an old soldier, and the second by Col, N. J. Scott; there is a regiment forming in Kentucky, the commander of which has not been fixed upon,

but will be tendered to Col. Ed. Marshall: there is a regiment in New Orleans, the Colonel of which has resigned, and another forming for which no appointments have been made; and als) a regiment in North-west Louisiana, in charge of Col. M. M. Black. regiments now numbering about 16,000 men, constitute the military department of the K. G. They have been picked with care, and constitute a body of men of whom any nation

might be proud.

The second department of the Organization is purely financial, and embraces such a class of citizens as can assist in raising means for the K. G. C. It is thus organized: A Central Financial Bureau at New Orleans; State Central Committees in each Southern State, and then in every important place sub-committees, No K. G. C. has the right, or is authorized to accept monies that may be tendered as a loan or donation, except he is one of said committee or is authorized by them so to do. Monies collected are placed in the hands of the chairman of sub-committees, receipts given therefor, and the amount is forwarded to the chairman of the State Central Committee, who issues his receipt and then forwards the money to the Chairman of the Central Financial Bureau at New Orleans, who also receipts to the central committee-man. It is then the func-tion of the Central Financial Bureau to purchase all arms, ammunition, clothing and othemase an arms, ammunition, cioning and other necessary material, keeping vouchers for everything purchased. In this way the proper use of the money is guaranteed. Many of these committees are now at work and others are being formed.

The third department of the K. G. C. has for its mission and labor the direction and control of the whole Order - to make its laws and

counsel the commander-in-chief.

It will therefore be at once perceived why we can only expect to succeed by acting in perfect good faith to each other. That vast sums of money are needed to carry out the objects of the K, G. C. will be apparent to every one, and it is equally as apparent that time must be consumed in acquiring that money. A great many members seem to think there is

nothing to do but to order a move of one regiment, and that everything then follows as a matter of course. But, fellow-soldiers, te undeceived at once. But a course would involve the certain destruction of the body so landing in Mexico, even if our Government would allow it to leave, which it would not. To arrest these misunderstandings and to have a proper and definite course marked out. I therefore order that each company or part of a company of the American Legion, K. G. C., send one delegate to Head quarters, at Raleigh, N. C., to complete the perfect organization of said American Legion, and to issue such commissions as are needful in every Department. These delegates must be intrusted with full and discretionary powers, and they shall set from day to day until the whole work has been sat-isfactorily accomplished. To this convention a full and absolute statement of everything pertaining to the K. G. C. will be made. It will be the province of the convention to fix the time of departure—the mode, the arms, priforms for each to about 15 miles and the about 15 miles are supplied to the state of t uniforms, &c., and to change our ceremonial so that the organization may be sifted of its false friends and vicious members. The K G. C. was intended for gentlemen, not for row-G. was intended for gentlemen, not for row-dies—to assist society, not to destroy—to extend our civilization, not to disgrace it. Therefore, you will, by subscription or otherwise, send your delegates to Raleigh, N. C., on the seventh of May, (557) 1860. I desire also, that every delegate shall have selected his candidate and got his acceptance in case of his election. The candidate should be a man of experience, character, firmness and reputation as a soldier. He must be of Southern birth and interests. I shall resign my positions immediately on the organization of the convention.

Those of you who get this in time will please address me at Raleigh, N. C., at once. Do your duty, brothers, and the K. G. C. will tri-

umph as sure as we now live.

In the name of this Legion, and by the love I have and do bear you, I command you to heed this letter.

I am always yours in Arms, GEORGE BICKLEY K. G. C. President American Legion.

[It may be proper to add, that so far as we have been able to ascertain, most of the names mentioned in the above circular letter, are at present identified with the Confederate cause in the Southern States.

Col. Tyler himself was arrested at Cincinnati some months since, having in his pocket a Colonel's commission in the rebel army.

The above letters signed by him, though written in confidence, are published for the reason that they may be found to be of some interest to the public; though had not their author assumed the position he has chosen to do in behalf of treason, we should have hesitated long before giving them to the public. As it is, we have no conscientious scruples in the matter. The original documents are now in our possession.]

COVER MISSING